

CEMA Signal



Chatham County's Long-term Disaster Recovery Plan

It's your community. Wouldn't you like to have a say in the recovery process?

In a community like Chatham County that is vulnerable to hurricanes, flooding, and sea level rise, the question is not if, but when a major disaster will occur. These events can result in the loss of lives and change the fabric of our society. Most communities around the nation do not have the plans in place to appropriately position themselves to recover from catastrophic events over months and years. Chatham County is working to develop a plan for these types of events.

The Disaster Recovery and Redevelopment Plan (DRP) is being cultivated by Chatham Emergency Management Agency (CEMA) in collaboration with partners across the County, including local governments, community partners, employers, and the general public. Once completed, the Plan will guide the County's recovery efforts that cause a long-term impact to infrastructure, housing, local economy, and the health, social, cultural, historic, environmental fabric of the community. The Plan envisions a flexible recovery timeline for the County, customizable recovery goals and objectives, as well as incorporation of the entire community and their role in long-term recovery. The Plan is being created with the understanding that recovery following each disaster is unique, and that recovery may last a few weeks to a few years depending on the event.

In order to incorporate the whole community, CEMA has used Federal Recovery Support Functions (RSFs) which will serve as the coordinating structures for key functional areas (community planning, the economy, social services, housing, infrastructure, natural and cultural resources, and Community Organizations Active



Nearly 100 Chatham County staff and municipal employees attended the May 27th kickoff meeting

in Disaster [COAD]) during recovery operations. Consider each RSF to be the spoke of the County's overall recovery wheel, where subject matter experts and key stakeholders provide comprehensive support to advance critical recovery operations. CEMA is developing tools and resources to help the RSFs activate and sustain operations during recovery so that each group has the necessary resources to recover and rebuild after a disaster. The County is also initiating a redevelopment initiative that will be incorporated into the Plan. The redevelopment initiative will look at existing plans, policies and procedures to identify how the County can build back with increased resilience and sustainability.

Simply put, CEMA's efforts are positioning Chatham County to be in a better position to recover from a disaster smarter, faster, and stronger.

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A Message from the Director



Now that the 2014 Atlantic Hurricane Season is behind us, it is time to start thinking about winter weather. Although snow and ice aren't as commonly associated with Georgia as other parts of the country, even small amounts in Savannah can cause significant problems, such as hazardous road conditions and power outages.

To help residents plan, prepare and stay informed about severe weather, Governor Nathan Deal proclaimed the first week of December as Winter

Weather Preparedness Week. The beginning of the winter season is the perfect time to make sure you are prepared for extreme elements. Below you will find helpful tips from our partners at the Georgia Emergency Management Agency.

Terminology

As we prepare for colder months, knowing winter weather terms will help you put your personal preparedness plan into action. Here are three key winter weather terms to be familiar with:

- A **winter storm watch** is issued when significant winter weather, such as snow, sleet or freezing rain is possible, but not imminent. A watch is typically issued 12 to 48 hours before the possibility of winter weather. This is the time to prepare.
- A **winter weather advisory** indicates that winter weather is imminent and may cause inconveniences; monitor media for your local impacts. A winter weather advisory means weather is expected to cause inconveniences, but does not meet warning criteria. This is the time to put your winter weather safety plan into action.
- A **winter storm warning** is issued when a significant winter storm is imminent and is a dangerous threat to life and property. These warnings are typically issued up to 36 hours before an event that has an 80 percent or greater chance of significant winter precipitation. This is the time to put your winter weather safety plan into action.

Preparedness Tips

Now is the perfect time to take the proper precautions to ensure that your home and vehicle are ready for the winter season. Here are a few tips to get you started:

- Prepare a Ready kit of emergency supplies for your home. Include a three-day supply of nonperishable food, water, a flashlight with extra batteries, a NOAA Weather Radio, adequate clothing and blankets to keep you warm, as well as additional supplies for the unique needs of your family, such as medications.
- Keep an extra Ready kit in the trunk of your car. In addition to the basic essentials, consider adding a portable cell phone charger, ice scraper, extra blanket, sand for traction and jumper cables.
- Create an emergency communications plan so family members will know who to contact if separated during a storm. Designate at least one out-of-town contact who all family members can call.

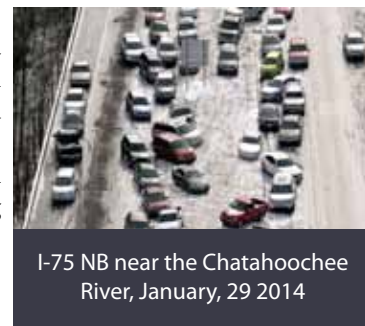
- Make sure you have a cell phone with an emergency charging option (car, solar hand crank, etc.) in case of a power failure.
- Winterize your home by placing weather stripping around doors and windows. During cold weather, use outdoor faucet covers or allow faucets to drip, and open cabinet doors to let heat reach uninsulated pipes under sinks and appliances near exterior walls.
- Identify an alternate heat source, like a fireplace or wood-burning stove, and stock sufficient heating fuel. You may become isolated in your home and regular fuel sources may be cut off. Store a good supply of dry, seasoned wood for your fireplace. When using an alternate heat source, make sure you have adequate ventilation to avoid carbon monoxide poisoning.

Driving During Winter Weather

It's always best to minimize travel during hazardous winter weather. However, if you can't postpone your trip, be sure you know the basics of winter weather driving and are fully equipped to safely make the journey!

If you must drive:

- Maintain at least a half tank of gas during the winter season.
- Keep an extra Ready Kit in the trunk of your car. In addition to the basic essentials, consider adding a portable cell phone charger, ice scraper, extra blanket, sand for traction and jumper cables.
- Follow directions from local officials about driving during snow and ice storms, and drive with caution.
- SLOW DOWN to at least half your normal speed and use a low gear as you drive.
- Don't stop when going up a hill. Build some momentum on a flat roadway before you take on the hill.
- Do not use cruise control and avoid abrupt steering maneuvers.
- Be mindful of road crews working to clear the snow and ice from the roadway.
- Motorists should not pass a dump truck spreading the salt/gravel mixture, as gravel may bounce up and could break windshields. Follow at least 100 feet behind all vehicles.
- If you come to a traffic signal that is not working, treat it as a four-way stop.
- Beware of black ice, especially on bridges, overpasses and shady areas. Four-wheel-drive may help your vehicle get going in the slushy stuff, but it's of no use when you're trying to steer or safely stop on a slippery road surface.
- Watch for fallen trees or power lines.
- If at any point during your trip you feel that the weather is too bad to continue driving, simply stay put.



I-75 NB near the Chatahoochee River, January, 29 2014

Becoming Disaster Resistant

With a grant awarded by FEMA through the Georgia Emergency Management Agency, Chatham County and participating jurisdictions will be working together to develop a plan that will serve as the blueprint for helping to make our communities more resistant to disasters. Atkins, North America, Inc is the contractor that will be managing the planning efforts on behalf of the County. The general purposes of the plan are to: protect life and property by reducing the potential for future damages and economic losses that result from natural hazards; allow the participating communities to qualify for pre and post disaster grant funding; speed recovery and redevelopment following disaster events; demonstrate a firm local commitment to hazard mitigation principles; and comply with state and federal legislative requirements.

Hazard mitigation planning helps community officials better serve the communities they represent. Benefits include:

- Meeting the federal requirements of the Disaster Mitigation Act.
- Saving lives and property.
- Saving money.
- Speeding up recovery following disasters.
- Reducing future vulnerability through wise development and post-disaster recovery and reconstruction.
- Expediting the receipt of pre-disaster and post-disaster grant funding.
- Demonstrating a firm commitment to improving community health and safety.

The project kicked off on October 21 with the County and all of the jurisdictions participating at a meeting in Garden City, GA. The current hazards for the County were examined and potential newly identified hazards were discussed. Currently, a public participation survey is posted on the County website for citizens to share their knowledge regarding hazards and how they would like to learn more about safeguarding themselves and the community. The next step is for the contractor to gather data and perform a risk assessment for the County which will dictate the mitigation strategy and actions for the County and the jurisdictions. The plan is slated to be completed in the summer of 2015.

Hazard Mitigation



Remembering Ms. Nell Hart

On December 14, 2014, we lost one of our own. It is with sincere and deep sorrow that we announce the passing of Ms. Nell Hart. If you ever visited the CEMA office, you likely had the pleasure of being greeted with a

warm smile and friendly spirit. Nell was not only a CEMA fixture, but a bright spot within the County.

Ms. Hart came to Savannah in 1984 as a temporary employee with the Chatham County Tag Office. In 1985 she worked as a Clerk and later advanced to Senior Clerk with the Chatham County Sheriff's Department. In 1988, when CEMA was still known as Chatham County Civil Defense, Ms. Hart became the Administrative Assistant and had been a part of our family ever since.

Ms. Hart was an integral part of CEMA and contributed greatly to our organization. She developed and designed Chatham County's first Tornado Safety booklet, the first "About CEMA" brochure and designed Chatham County's first Evacuation Map. Ms. Hart was a dedicated professional who was committed to growth and

business networking. In her last three decades serving the county, Ms. Hart supported and served thousands of governmental clients, businesses and residents. She was known and loved by many for being an active volunteer within the community. We are thankful for the time we had with Ms. Hart and we will certainly miss her sweet smile, and contagious spirit.

"Have a blessed day," four words you almost certainly heard when leaving CEMA's office or wrapping up a phone call with Ms. Nell. So, if you find yourself thinking of her and missing her, wish someone a blessed day.



Above: 2014 CEMA Hurricane Conference
Top Right: Nell, 2014
Bottom Right: 2011 CEMA Hurricane Conference
Left: 2014 CEMA Staff Group Photo



Wireless Emergency Alerts

With collaboration from the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the wireless industry, the group developed a text-like messaging system that alerts cell phone owners of an emergency. This latest revision of the system is known as Wireless Emergency Alerts or WEA. By creating this program, WEA enabled devices automatically alert cell devices on cell towers across the United States. This program has grown over the years since it was originally designed. Some of the first names of the program were PLAN (Personal Localized Alerting Network) and CMAS (Commercial Mobile Alert System). This is not a mandatory program for cell providers to provide this type of service to cell phones. It was not until around 2012 that cell providers started to comply with the newly set guidelines for sending alerts to cell devices.

By default, all cell phones that are WEA compliant are set to alert for the following messages:

- Alerts issued by the President of the United States.
- Alerts involving imminent threats to safety of life.
- AMBER Alerts.
- Extreme Weather Warnings

You can partially opt out of some of these messages. Three of these four messages can be turned off. You can turn off alerts for AMBER Alerts, Extreme Weather Warnings and Alerts involving imminent threats to safety of life. The only message you CAN NOT turn off is an emergency alert issued by the President of the United States.

WEA works by allowing Pre-authorized National, State or Local governments the ability to send alerts regarding public safety emergencies such as sheltering in place or evacuation orders due to a chemical spill, terrorist threat or severe weather. These alerts are sent through participating wireless carriers and delivered to the cell devices. These free messages are delivered instantly to cellular devices in the targeted areas. You can live in one part of the United States, visit another part of the Country, and if there is a WEA message for the area you are in, you will receive the message. When the message arrives, if you have the ringer set to "on", your phone will play a unique sound to alert you that you have a WEA message. These messages are no more than 90 characters and include the following:

- Who is sending the alert
- What is happening
- Who is affected
- What action to take

If you have not received a WEA message on your phone, your phone might not be: WEA compatible or in a participating cellular provider. Contact your wireless provider to find out if your phone can be updated to allow WEA messages or if they participate in this program. Pre-paid phones can receive these messages too as long as the phone is WEA compatible. (See attached image).

Chatham Emergency Management Agency will soon start participating in this program. CEMA purchased software to allow the agency the ability to issue localized emergency messages to residents in Chatham County as well as out of town visitors.



Extreme
Severe

Warning Type	WEA Message
Tsunami Warning (coming late 2013)	Tsunami danger on the coast. Go to high ground or move inland. Check local media. -NWS
Tornado Warning	Tornado Warning in this area til hh:mm tzT. Take shelter now. Check local media. -NWS
Extreme Wind Warning	Extreme Wind Warning this area til hh:mm tzT ddd. Take shelter. -NWS
Hurricane Warning	Hurricane Warning this area til hh:mm tzT ddd. Check local media and authorities. -NWS
Typhoon Warning	Typhoon Warning this area til hh:mm tzT ddd. Check local media and authorities. -NWS
Flash Flood Warning	Flash Flood Warning this area til hh:mm tzT. Avoid flooded areas. Check local media. -NWS
Dust Storm Warning	Dust Storm Warning in this area til hh:mm tzT ddd. Avoid travel. Check local media. -NWS

Legend
tzT = timezone
ddd= three letter abbreviation
for day of the week

Cold Weather Pet Safety

You're probably already aware of the risks posed by warm weather and leaving pets in hot cars, but did you know that cold weather also poses serious threats to your pets' health? Cold weather may worsen some medical conditions such as arthritis. Your pet should be examined by a veterinarian at least once a year, and it's as good a time as any to get him/her checked to make sure (s)he is ready and as healthy as possible for cold weather.

Here are some tips to keep your pets safe during cold weather:

- **Know the limits:** Just like people, pets' cold tolerance can vary from pet to pet based on their coat, body fat, activity level, and health. Be aware of your pet's tolerance for cold weather, and adjust accordingly. You will probably need to shorten your dog's walks in very cold weather to protect you both from weather-associated health risks. Arthritic and elderly pets may have more difficulty walking on snow and ice and may be more prone to slipping and falling. Long-haired or thick-coated dogs tend to be more cold-tolerant, but are still at risk in cold weather. Short-haired pets feel the cold faster because they have less protection, and short-legged pets may become cold faster because their bellies and bodies are more likely to come into contact with snow-covered ground. Pets with diabetes, heart disease, kidney disease, or hormonal imbalances (such as Cushing's disease) may have a harder time regulating their body temperature, and may be more susceptible to problems from temperature extremes. The same goes for very young and very old pets. If you need help determining your pet's temperature limits, consult your veterinarian.
- **Stay inside:** Cats and dogs should be kept inside during cold weather. It's a common belief that dogs and cats are more resistant than people to cold weather because of their fur, but it's untrue. Like people, cats and dogs are susceptible to frostbite and hypothermia and should be kept inside. Longer-haired and thick-coated dog breeds, such as huskies and other dogs bred for colder climates, are more tolerant of cold weather; but no pet should be left outside for long periods of time in below-freezing weather.
 - **Check the paws:** Check your dog's paws frequently for signs of cold-weather injury or damage, such as cracked paw pads or bleeding.
 - **Wipe down:** During walks, your dog's feet, legs and belly may pick up deicers, antifreeze, or other chemicals that could be toxic. When you get back inside, wipe down (or wash) your pet's feet, legs and belly to remove these chemicals and reduce the risk that your dog will be poisoned after (s)he licks them off of his/her feet or fur.
- **Collar and chip:** Many pets become lost in winter because snow and ice can hide recognizable scents that might normally help your pet find his/her way back home. Make sure your pet has a well-



fitting collar with up-to-date identification and contact information. A microchip is a more permanent means of identification, but it's critical that you keep the registration up to date.

- **Stay home:** Hot cars are a known threat to pets, but cold cars also pose significant risk to your pet's health. Pets that are young, old, ill, or thin are particularly susceptible to cold environments and should never be left in cold cars.

- **Prevent poisoning:** Clean up any antifreeze spills quickly, as even small amounts of antifreeze can be deadly. Make sure your pets don't have access to medication bottles, household chemicals,

potentially toxic foods such as onions, xylitol (a sugar substitute) and chocolate.

- **Make some noise:** A warm vehicle engine can be an appealing heat source for outdoor and feral cats, but it's deadly. Check underneath your car, bang on the hood, and honk the horn before starting the engine to encourage feline hitchhikers to abandon their roost under the hood.



- **Avoid ice:** When walking your dog, stay away from frozen ponds, lakes and other water. You don't know if the ice will support your dog's weight, and if your dog breaks through the ice it could be deadly. And if this happens and you instinctively try to save your dog, both of your lives could be in jeopardy.
- **Play dress-up:** If your dog has a short coat or seems bothered by the cold weather, consider a sweater or dog coat. Have several on hand, so you can use a dry sweater or coat each time your dog goes outside.
- **Be prepared:** Cold weather also brings the risks of severe winter weather and power outages. Prepare a disaster/emergency kit, and include your pet in your plans. Have enough food, water and medicine (including any prescription medications as well as heartworm and flea/tick preventives) on hand to get through at least 5 days.



Wildfire Protection Planning

A Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) provides a community with a road map to reduce its risk from wildfire. A CWPP is designed through collaboration between state and local fire agencies, homeowners and landowners, and other interested parties such as city councils, utilities, homeowners associations, environmental organizations, and other local stakeholders. The plan identifies strategic sites and methods for risk reduction and structural protection projects across jurisdictional boundaries.

Comprehensive plans provide long-term guidance for growth, reflecting a community's values and future expectations. The plan implements the community's values and serves to protect natural and community resources and public safety. Planning also enables communities to address their development patterns in the Wildland Urban Interface and determine how they can reduce their risk through alternative development patterns. The formal legal standing of the plan and its central role in local government decision making underscores the opportunity to use this planning process as an effective means for reducing wildfire risk.

The extreme weather conditions that are conducive to wildfire disasters (usually a combination of extended drought, low relative humidity and high winds) can occur in this area of Georgia as infrequently as every 10-15 years. This is not a regular event, but as the number of homes that have been built in or adjacent to forested or wildland areas increases, it can turn a wildfire under these weather conditions into a major disaster. Wildfires move fast and can quickly overwhelm the resources of even the best equipped fire department. Advance planning can save lives, homes and businesses.

A CWPP includes a locally assessed evaluation of the wildland urban interface areas of the county, looking at the critical issues regarding access to these areas, risk to properties from general issues such as building characteristics and "fire wise" practices and response from local fire fighting resources. It further incorporates a locally devised action plan to mitigate these risks and hazards through planning, education and other avenues that may become available to address the increasing threat of wildland fire. The CWPP does not obligate the county financially in any way, but instead lays a foundation for improved emergency response if and when grant funding is available to the county.

In August, Chatham EMA with the assistance of The Georgia Forestry Commission and local ESF-4 Partners, conducted community

assessments and began developing a County CWPP. The CWPP will be available upon completion and the findings and recommendations will become part of the County's Hazards Mitigation Plan.

The objectives of the CWPP will be to help set priorities for the implementation of wildfire mitigation measures in Chatham County. The plan will include prioritized recommendations for the appropriate types and methods of fuel reduction and structure ignitability reduction that will protect our communities and essential infrastructure. It will also include a plan for wildfire suppression and community-centered actions to:

- Educate citizens on wildfire, its risks, and ways to protect lives and properties,
- Support community fire rescue and suppression entities,
- Focus on collaborative decision-making and citizen participation,
- Develop and implement effective mitigation strategies, and
- Develop and implement effective community ordinances and codes.

Coastal areas of Georgia, including Chatham County, do not have to fall victim to this type of disaster. Homes (and communities) can be designed, built and maintained to withstand a wildfire even in the absence of fire equipment and firefighters on the scene. It takes planning and commitment at the local level before the wildfire disaster occurs and that is what the CWPP is all about.

L to R: Chief Wade Simmons, Pooler Fire Department; Mr. Willard "Will" Fell, CWPP Specialist with the Georgia Forestry Commission; Chief Ferman Tyler, Bloomingdale Fire; discuss wildland and urban interface issues in western Chatham County communities.



ESF 04: Fire fighting



Have You Heard The Sirens? It's Only a Test.

When: First Wednesday of Every Month
Where: Chatham County
Time: Noon

The monthly **test** is necessary to ensure that the Emergency Outdoor Siren Warning System is functioning properly.

Hug a Tree: Survival Tips for Children



Jimmy Beveridge

On a Saturday in February 1981, three brothers were together on Palomar Mountain approximately 60 miles north east of San Diego, CA. They were walking on a popular nature trail a half-mile from their camping site where their parents were preparing lunch. Two of the brothers believed that their 9-year-old brother Jimmy was racing them back to camp. But Jimmy never arrived.

Over the course of three days, nearly 400 volunteers searched for the boy. It was the largest in the history of San Diego County. His body was finally found, curled up next to a tree in a ravine, about two miles from the campground. He had died from hypothermia. The tragedy gnawed at volunteers, but two took it personally. Ab Taylor, a Border Patrol agent and renowned tracker, and Tom Jacobs, a free-lance writer and photographer, both had been members of the search team looking for Jimmy. It was the first time in Mr. Taylor's thirty-one years as a tracker that he had failed to find a missing child alive. The experience prompted him to collaborate with Jacobs in the development of an educational program designed to teach children, ages 5-12,

very basic principles for staying safe in the wilderness. The program derives its name from its primary message: If you are lost, stay put – hug a tree – until help arrives.



Ab Taylor, shown in 1975

Survival Tips for Children

1. Hug a tree – Once you know you are lost, hug a tree! One of the greatest fears many of us have is being alone. Hugging a tree or other stationary object and even talking to it can help calm you down, and prevent panic. By staying in one place, you will be found far more quickly, and won't be injured in a fall.



2. Always carry a whistle and a trash bag – Whenever you go hiking, you should carry a whistle on a lanyard around your neck and a trash bag. By making a hole in the side of the bag (so you don't suffocate!) for your face, and putting it over your head, it will keep you dry and warm. The whistle can be heard from farther away than your voice, even when you are yelling very loudly. And it takes less energy to use.

3. Your parents won't be angry with you – Time and again, children have avoided searchers because they were ashamed of getting lost, and afraid of punishment. Anyone can become lost, even adults! So don't be ashamed. Just admit it, accept it and take actions to be comfortable while you wait for the searchers to arrive. Your parents will be so happy to see you again, and to know that you are safe. So there's no need to be frightened or worried about that. And they will be so proud of you for using your head since it is your best survival tool.

4. Make yourself big – From a helicopter, people are hard to see when they are standing up, when they are in a group of trees, or wearing dark clothing. Find your tree to hug near a small clearing if possible. Wear a brightly colored jacket (red and orange are easy to see from far away) when you go into the woods or the desert. Lie down when the helicopter flies over. If it is cold and you are rested, make crosses or an "SOS" using broken twigs, branches, rocks or by dragging your foot in the dirt.

5. Animals are afraid of humans — If you hear a noise at night, yell at it! If it is an animal it will run away to protect itself. If it is a searcher, you will be found.

6. You have hundreds of friends looking for you – Many children who are lost don't realize that if they will just sit down and stay put, one of the many searchers will find them. The searchers will be yelling your name, but they are not angry. They are just worried about you and want to find you as quickly as possible. Don't be afraid to let them know where you are.

Published with permission from the National Association of Search and Rescue, www.nasar.org

ESF 09: Search and Rescue



Then and Now:

Left: Ab Talor teaches "Hug-A-Tree" to school children in 1980

Right: Children practice "Hug-A-Tree" techniques with Eastern Oregon Search and Rescue in September 2014



Message From the Director Continued

Continued from page 2

Stopped or Stalled?

- Remain in your vehicle where rescuers are most likely to find you. Do not set out on foot unless you can see a building close by where you know you can take shelter.
- Don't idle for a long time with the windows up or in an enclosed space.
- Run the engine and heater about 10 minutes each hour to keep warm and to conserve your battery and gasoline. When the engine is running, open a downwind window slightly for ventilation and periodically clear snow from the exhaust pipe. This will protect you from possible carbon monoxide poisoning.
- Exercise to maintain body heat, but avoid overexertion.

Winter Weather Outlook

What does winter have in store for Georgians? Recent winters have consisted of progressively colder temperatures, heavier amounts of snow and thicker layers of ice. Since 1929, Atlanta has averaged 2 inches of snow per year but the average has increased to 3.4 inches over the past five years. According to the NOAA Climate Prediction Center winter outlook, the pattern of colder temperatures and above normal chances of precipitation is likely to continue during the upcoming winter.

While research continues into what the upcoming winter season might have in store, one key factor meteorologists examine

when creating long-range outlooks is the existing snowpack in Siberia. Research shows a relationship between the size of the Siberian snowpack in October and the amount of arctic air buildup and its accompanying impact on the Jetstream flow. The October 2014 Siberian snowpack was the second highest on record since 1967 with only the winter of 1976 having more. That could mean a cold, wet winter is in store.

Do not wait until a winter storm is imminent to prepare your home and family. This is the time to make a plan and build an emergency kit. Remember, surviving a small or large storm depends a lot of how prepared you are. You play a role in your safety and the safety of your family. To review Winter Weather Preparedness tips, visit our website at ChathamEmergency.org.



Clayton Scott, CEMA Director

Two Flu-Related Deaths Confirmed in Coastal Health District

The Georgia Department of Public Health (DPH) has confirmed the flu-related deaths of two elderly females in the Coastal Health District – one from Chatham County and one from Effingham County. These are the first for our area, but bring the number up to seven confirmed flu-related deaths in the state of Georgia. The Coastal Health District is made up of Bryan, Camden, Chatham, Effingham, Glynn, Liberty, Long, and McIntosh counties.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends everyone six months and older get vaccinated against the flu. The influenza virus is very contagious and is spread mainly by droplets from infected people when they cough, sneeze, or talk. While the flu vaccine may not protect against every strain of flu it is still the best protection against the flu. Antiviral medications such as Tamiflu® or Relenza® are an important second line of defense against the flu. Treatment with antiviral drugs is especially important for people at high risk of serious flu complications or people who are very sick with flu. Antiviral drugs work best when started within two days of coming down with the flu, so it is important to call your doctor as soon as the first symptoms appear.

There are also several simple, everyday precautions people can take to avoid getting and spreading the flu including:

- Cover your cough (try to cough into the crook of your elbow, not your hand).
- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water. If soap and water is not available use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Clean common surfaces like countertops and desks.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth because germs spread this way.
- Stay home from work or school and away from others when you're sick.

Flu symptoms include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills, and fatigue. According to the CDC, symptoms start one to four days after the virus enters the body which means that you may be able to pass on the flu to someone else before you know you are sick, as well as while you are sick.



Rising from the Ashes



The Hancock County Courthouse in Sparta, GA, experienced a massive fire on Monday, August 11, 2014, which destroyed almost everything in the building, leaving only the exterior brick walls standing and in need of stabilization. The fire continued to burn for several weeks, particularly due to nearly one ton of coal that had been left in the building's basement from a former furnace heating system. Modern steel elevator doors and other hollow steel doors melted completely, indicating the fire's temperature exceeded 1000 degrees. Salvaged fireproof safes and cabinets contained piles of ash when opened.

The disaster response to the lost and damaged records from the NCH (natural/cultural/historical, ESF11-C) community within the state was executed according to preparedness. Volunteers from both Heritage Emergency Response Alliance, Atlanta and Savannah Heritage Emergency Response contacted local Hancock County officials and offered their assistance, and communicated information to their members. Three prequalified vendors under the statewide Department of Administrative Services contract for recovery of damaged records all responded and provided cost estimates in a timely fashion. On Friday, September 5th, a five person team from the Georgia Archives responded to an invitation to make a site visit and assessment. Virtually no paper records of the County Commission survived the fire.

Upon further investigation, the team concluded that about 20% of the paper records from the Superior Court and about 90% of the records from the Probate Court survived the fire with varying degrees of substantial damage, but possibly could be saved. They were moved by a nonprofessional team into a building behind the former courthouse which has a good roof, air conditioning, and locked doors. Most of the damaged records are in varying degrees of wetness, and some onset of mold was observed, which can be expected to worsen. Some records were still so hot when moved, they burned through the plastic bags they had been placed into for moving. Some

portion of the county's public records do exist in duplicate formats in off-site locations, most either microfilm or digital, however precise determination of the extent of survival of permanent (i.e., archival) public records cannot be made at this time because comprehensive onsite and off-site records inventories may be incomplete.

Although the County has insurance through the Association County Commissioners of Georgia, at this time no plans have been made by officials to utilize any insurance settlement funds for public records recovery and restoration. There are plans to try to restore as much of the historic 1881 structure as possible. In mid-October, Hancock County awarded the contract for construction management of the courthouse rebuilding and restoration to J.W. Spratlin & Sons, Construction, of Lincolnton, GA. It is unclear at this time whether or not their work will include recovery and restoration of surviving records and documents.



LEPC Website Re-design

Major changes are coming to the Local Emergency Planning Committee's website (www.lepc.com). The LEPC is a group that develops emergency response plans pertinent to chemical releases, and provides information about chemicals in the community to the citizens.

The new website is being designed by Speros, a local Internet Technology company. With the new revisions to the LEPC website, you will now be able to view the website easily on any internet capable device, such as phones and tablets. The new website design will also include an events calendar which will aid community outreach and awareness, and also notify the citizens of the public meetings that are held monthly, and encourage citizens to attend.

Various forms will also be added for community groups to volunteer their resources in the event of an emergency. With local companies volunteering equipment, it will help improve emergency planning, as well as emergency response and recovery in the event of a chemical emergency. If you have any resources that you would like to volunteer in the event of an emergency, please check back soon to register and help your community when it needs you the most!

ESF 11b: Natural & Cultural Resources,
Denise McCoy, Geologist, O'BRIEN & GER



Bordes Award Recognizes Roberts



James T. Roberts, CPP, has been selected as the 2014 recipient of the Roy N. Bordes Council Member Award of Excellence. ASIS President Richard Widup, Jr., CPP, will honor Roberts and present the award at Tuesday's Networking Luncheon.

This annual award recognizes a member of ASIS International who has exhibited selfless devotion as a volunteer, emphasizing significant contributions at the council level over an extended period of time.

Roberts certainly meets those criteria. He has been actively involved in all aspects of council activity since 1988, when he served for two years on the Healthcare Services Committee. In 2001, he joined the Law Enforcement Liaison Council (LELC), where he has served with distinction to the present. Briane Grey, current LELC chair, nominated Roberts for this honor, noting that he has been a major force in developing a new tool in public-private crime-fighting partnerships. First appointed to the council's Operation Cooperation committee, he worked to raise the profile of the Certified Protection Professional program within the U.S. Marshals Service.

Eventually, Roberts was appointed as the first chair of the LELC/International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) liaison committee. Using the 2009 study titled OPERATION PARTNERSHIP, Roberts identified and extracted the need-to-know items, updated and expanded them, and reworked them into an easy-to-use implementation document. The two-year process resulted in OPERATION PARTNERSHIP: A Primer on Getting Started, a 23-page ASIS document used to this day by security professionals, chiefs of police, business leaders, and members of local governments to implement joint crime-fighting partnerships.

As the LELC's current vice chair, Roberts serves as a point of contact for the other ASIS councils. He provided advice to the ASIS Strategic Planning Committee on LELC's strategic direction. To ensure leadership development within the council, he has ensured that each new council member is paired with a seasoned, knowledgeable mentor from the council's roster who is able to teach the new member what he or she needs to know.

This award is named after another tireless council volunteer.

For more than 30 years before his untimely death, Roy N. Bordes was a leader on the Physical Security Council and ultimately served as a council vice president. Bordes was a well-known regular speaker at ASIS educational programs and frequently led sessions at the annual seminar.

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On behalf of CEMA, I would like to congratulate you on earning this tremendous and well deserved honor. We are lucky to have someone of your caliber so dedicated to making their community a safer place. From CERT to CCOAD, your continuous support and dedication makes you an invaluable part of our agency and volunteer programs. You are selfless, you lead by example and are a shining example of what a volunteer should be. Thank you for your years of service to CEMA.

**Clayton Scott
Director, Chatham Emergency
Management Agency**

Volunteers

Critical Workforce Sheltering



CEMA Staff Visits a Critical Workforce Shelter

Every spring, before the start of hurricane season, CEMA meets with each municipality to discuss critical workforce sheltering needs. This year was no different. The team met with the municipalities and also emailed out information to different county departments that would need to shelter in the event of a hurricane.

CEMA has mutual aid agreements in place with several locations within Chatham County for Category 2 storms and lower, as well as some outside of Chatham County in the event of a Category 3 or higher hurricane. This year we invited those sheltering with us to participate in tours of each facility. We toured the facilities to ensure they would meet the needs of partners sheltering and to determine what resources we as workers will need to bring with us. Some of the things we were looking for were if there was enough refrigeration space for Public Health and their vaccines, lodging and shower space, and to see if the kitchen would be usable for feeding workers. We also made sure there were hookups for generators. If generators were on site, they were surveyed to ensure the facility could have power in the event of a power outage.

ESF 06: Mass Care

Chatham County Implements an Emergency Work Assignment Policy



During emergency and disaster operations, Chatham County will face situations requiring the use of additional personnel. As a result, every Chatham County employee must be classified into one of four Categories for assignment during emergency operations. This Policy implements procedures for defining employee work responsibilities during an approaching or declared emergency and the recovery period following an emergency or disaster.

In order to accomplish this, County employees will log into the County Employee Disaster Database and complete the Emergency Work Assignment Package and will update this package anytime pertinent information changes. Supervisors will review employees' Emergency Work Assignment Package at least annually. In addition, the Chatham County Emergency Management Agency (CEMA) will review county-wide Emergency Work Assignment Packages annually before the start of the Atlantic hurricane season.

Category 1 – Department Continuity of Operations (COOP) Team:

Staff members in this category manage the Department's COOP. Generally, the COOP Team is made up of the minimum contingent required to meet the department's needs of safeguarding and restoration of assets, resources and essential services.

Category 2 – Critical Workforce (CWF) Pre-Assigned:

Other than Category 1 COOP Team members, employees in this category are pre-assigned post-disaster functions. Most Category 2 employees are required to shelter with CEMA during the storm. Others may be required to return for their assignment immediately after the storm passes.

Category 3 – Critical Workforce (CWF) Available for Assignment:

This category includes those staff members that have not been designated in Category 1 or 2 above. These employees are available for assignment by the County to meet pre- and post-disaster staffing needs. Some of these employees may be required to shelter with CEMA during the storm; others may be required to return for assignment immediately after the storm passes.

Category 4 – Special Circumstance Staff:

Some staff may have a special circumstance that is identified in advance of an evacuation or emergency event which require them to be excused from emergency or disaster response and recovery duties. These staff members are not required to report during disaster conditions until the area is rendered safe.

Chatham County Disaster Readiness Program

In conjunction with this Policy, CEMA has been presenting Disaster Readiness Training to County employees over the past several months. During this presentation, we discuss the importance of having a Family Emergency Plan, which includes caring for pets, keeping your vital documents together and ready to go, having an Emergency Supply Kit, and more. The Emergency Work Assignments are reviewed and each of the Categories are explained in detail. Knowing that Category 1, COOP Operations and Category 2, Critical Workforce Assigned are committed to specific jobs, the Category 3, Critical Workforce Available for Assignment are the main focus of this Program. The County has plans to activate a Disaster Employee Reception Center (ERC) once

Category 3 Employees are recalled to Chatham County. Many current positions will not be needed during Disaster conditions, but many other jobs will be created. Employees will be recalled as jobs are created and we have the ability to house and feed them. As part of the process, County Employees have been asked to complete a skills survey today that will be used to match them to jobs. At the ERC, the employee will clock-in, receive a job assignment, a safety briefing, job training and transported to a work location. At the end of their shift, they will be transported back to the ERC, clock-out and report to their assigned housing site. At the end of this training, the Employees are given instructions on registering in the Employee Disaster Database. We will be reviewing this database and process information starting in January 2015.

What is an Emergency Operations Center (EOC)?



As the CEMA has reached out to many of the County employees through the Disaster Readiness Program, on the list of jobs that we will need to be filled include the Emergency Operations Center. There were always questions about what the EOC does. An EOC is the physical location where an organization comes together during an emergency to coordinate response and recovery actions and resources. This is where the coordination of information and resources takes place. The EOC is not an incident command post; rather, it is the operations center where coordination and management decisions are facilitated. The EOC operates using the Incident Command System (ICS).

ICS provides a management structure and system for conducting emergency operations. It is applicable to small scale daily operational activities as well as major mobilizations. ICS, provides EOC and operational staff with a standardized operational structure and common terminology. Because of this, ICS provides a useful and flexible management system that is adaptable to incidents involving multi-jurisdictional or multi-disciplinary responses. ICS provides the flexibility needed to rapidly activate and establish an emergency operation.

Strong management and staffing are needed during EOC operations. EOCs should be activated as soon as possible to ensure that rapid decision making can occur. CEMA offers EOC Staff Training for working in this environment and WebEOC Training for working with the management software.

Emergency Power Assessments



This past August, members of the US Army's 249th Engineer Battalion (Prime Power) descended upon Chatham County to conduct a two-week training exercise however, this was not the type of exercise that grabbed newspaper headlines. The team of nine personnel visited more than 60 critical public facilities identified throughout the County to assess the electrical infrastructure and power generation needs in the event a major disaster.

"Prime Power" is a US Army Corps of Engineers asset that provides a crucial mission for the Armed Forces operating overseas and the American public during disasters. The Battalion is headquartered at Ft. Belvoir, Virginia and possesses five geographically dispersed companies in the command structure. Ft.

Belvoir is home to The Headquarters Company and a Line Company, Ft. Bragg, North Carolina and Schofield Barracks in Hawaii also host Line Companies, and a Reserve Line Company calls Cranston, Rhode Island home. The locations allow the 249th Engineer Battalion to support the military and the nation when duty calls. The Army Corps of Engineers plays a critical role in supporting ESF 3, Public Works and Engineering. Coupling their electrical expertise with Corps of Engineers project management and logistics specialists, the "Power Team" brings a lot of capability to bear for disaster response.

The Critical Facility Power Assessments provided by the 249th's Team to Chatham County Emergency Planners included a comprehensive list of the type of generator and wiring required to get each of the facilities back up and running on emergency power. In the hands of an experienced electrician, this list is the blueprint for rapidly restoring power utilizing generator support. Conducting these pre-event assessments in other areas has demonstrated that after a disaster, power can be restored to a facility up to 24 hours faster, which can be crucial during the initial response phase following an event. Furthermore, the assessment can be used by facilities to pre-install equipment, like transfer switches and even generators, to make power recovery even faster.

Soldiers assigned to Prime Power spend a lot of time deployed, either for real-world missions, training exercises or attending schools. As one may imagine, the Soldiers who are assigned to the 249th are highly trained, educated, and experienced. It takes a unique kind of Soldier who can walk into an abandoned, or damaged power generation facility and within a short period of time establish power to an entire city. The deployment schedule is intense for the Soldier and their families...some Soldiers average more than 250 deployed days per year. It is a challenging but rewarding mission for these highly trained professionals, whose missions span the globe.



International Lineman's Rodeo, Photo Courtesy of Prime Power's Facebook Page

ESF 07: Logistics

CEMA Website Gets a Makeover

The internet has changed the way people gather information. How often do you find yourself "googling" topics throughout day, only to finally land on a website that you think can help you, but you can't seem to find what you're looking for. Knowing the importance of the web, CEMA has made it a top priority to have any and all emergency preparedness plans and information available on the website. But as more plans were added over the years, the website became a cluttered rabbit hole of outdated resources and information. The saying goes, "Once it's on the internet, it's out there forever," and in the case of the CEMA website, that was very true.

With a background in television news and new media, CEMA's Public Information Officer saw the opportunity to give the website a much needed facelift. With the help of Heidel Design, a clean, user friendly layout was created and the result should be easier navigation. With user engagement in mind, you will find our twitter feed at the top of the page, along with how to get CEMA updates via text message and how to sign up for CEMA Alerts. The new website is even mobile friendly! We you enjoy the new website and use it frequently when preparing safety plans for your family or business. Contact Meredith Ley at MAley@ChathamCounty.org if you have questions or want additional information.

HOME **ABOUT** **PREPARE NOW** **VOLUNTEER** **NEWS** **RESOURCES** FOLLOW US

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT CHATHAM COUNTY

SIGN UP FOR CEMA ALERT EMAILS
Enter your email address GO

GET UPDATES VIA TEXT MESSAGE
TEXT FOLLOW CHATHAMCEMA TO 40404

LATEST NEWS

Southbound Talmadge Bridge down to one lane due to accident please use caution. 10:17 AM Dec 8th Follow @ChathamCEMA on Twitter

Georgia Department of Coastal Health Confirms Two Flu-Related Deaths

Day 5 of Winter Weather Preparedness Week: Winter Weather Outlook

Day 4 of Winter Weather Preparedness Week: Driving During Winter Weather

Day 3 of Winter Weather Preparedness Week: Preparedness Tips

View News Archives

NEW CEMA SITE LAUNCHES
We've relaunched our site to be easier to use, load faster and be accessible on mobile devices. If you have any questions or comments about the site, please contact us.
[Contact CEMA](#)

CURRENT CONDITIONS
45° F and Cloudy
[Show More Details](#)

SEARCH
Search the CEMA website

PREPARE NOW

HURRICANES

TORNADOES

FLOODING

HEAR THE WARNING SIRENS?
The Chatham Emergency Management Agency conducts monthly tests of our emergency warning sirens on the first Wednesday of each month at 12 noon. If you hear a siren at any other time, it means take cover! [Read more about our warning siren program](#)

ESF 15: External Affairs

CEMA Debuts New BullEx Fire Suppression Training System

Emergencies can happen in the blink of an eye, so knowing how to respond quickly and effectively is key. On November 20, the Chatham Emergency Management Agency and Firehouse Subs joined together to celebrate the donation of much needed equipment that could help save lives. Thanks to the Firehouse Subs Public

Safety Foundation's generous funding, CEMA has acquired a BullEx Fire Suppression Unit for the purpose of training community volunteers on the safe and proper use of fire extinguishers through hands-on instruction and demonstrations. Before the grant, CEMA had to rely on donated fire extinguishers and supplies. The system is worth more than \$10,000.

CEMA has an active volunteer program known as the Community Emergency Response Team or CERT. The program works to harness the power of residents and ensure they are trained to respond to emergency situations in their communities. When emergencies happen, CERT members can give critical support to first responders, provide immediate assistance to victims, and organize spontaneous volunteers at a disaster site. CERT members also assist with non-emergency educational projects

that help improve the safety of our community. Every year, CEMA trains approximately 60 new CERT members, bringing the number of certified volunteers to nearly 400. Chatham CERT members are excited about this donation and to have the opportunity to train on the new system.

In 2005, Firehouse Subs created the Firehouse Subs Public Safety Foundation with the mission of providing funding, life-saving equipment, and educational opportunities to first-responders and public safety organizations. Through the non-profit program, Firehouse Subs has given \$11 million to hometown heroes in 41 states and Puerto Rico, including more than \$816,300 in Georgia.

Each Firehouse Subs restaurant recycles leftover, five-gallon pickle buckets and sells them to guests for \$2. Donation canisters on register counters explain the non-profit's mission and collect spare change, while the Round Up Program allows guests to "round up" their bill to the nearest dollar. All funds raised benefit the Foundation.



SSFD's Garron Cole Demonstrates the BullEx System



CEMA Director Clayton Scott Interviewed by WTOC



Left: CEMA's New BullEx Fire Suppression System on Display
Below: Firehouse Staff Member Tests System



Right: CEMA PIO, Meredith Ley Tests New System

Left: Members of CEMA, Southside Fire, Firehouse Subs and Other Grant Recipients Smile for the Camera



Food Assistance for Disaster Relief

Nothing is more important than providing food when people find themselves suddenly, and often critically, in need following a storm or man-made disaster. As part of the National Response Framework, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) provides nutrition assistance to those most affected by an emergency.



areas have received a Presidential major disaster declaration and when commercial channels of food distribution are available. The Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 provides the Secretary of Agriculture with the authority to establish temporary emergency standards of eligibility for households who are survivors of a disaster that disrupts commercial channels of food distribution after those channels have been restored.

D-SNAP in Government Disaster Response. D-SNAP is one important part of a broader government response in the aftermath of a disaster. Effective collaboration and communication among various government agencies is essential to serve those in need in the aftermath of a disaster.

USDA Role: The Federal government's National Response Framework designates various Emergency Support Functions (ESFs) to coordinate and leverage Federal resources to assist State and local disaster response and recovery efforts. USDA is the lead agency for ESF-11, Agriculture and Natural Resources, which includes disaster nutrition assistance. Different ESFs may be activated depending on the type and severity of a disaster. FNS staff participates at the National and Regional level when ESF-11 is activated.

FNS Role: FNS provides disaster nutrition assistance in three ways:

- Provides USDA Foods for shelters and other mass feeding sites;
- Provides USDA Foods for distribution directly to households in need in certain limited circumstances, and
- Approves D-SNAP operations and provides funding for 100% of disaster benefits and 50% of State administrative costs.

The approval of a D-SNAP plan is not a legal determination by FNS of compliance with Federal Civil Rights laws. FNS supports the State's efforts to provide D-SNAP benefits by providing policy guidance, training, and technical assistance to State agencies as they plan, implement, and assess their D-SNAP activities. FNS provides approval for State D-SNAP Plans and State applications to operate the D-SNAP and uses the information provided in post-disaster reviews and assessments to improve D-SNAP policy, training, and technical assistance.

The State Role: The primary responsibility for providing emergency food assistance rests at the State level. State agencies must design their own D-SNAP Plans and update them annually. After a disaster strikes, they must evaluate the requirement to establish feeding programs and if needed, notify USDA of the types and quantities of food that relief organizations need for emergency feeding operations. FNS then supplies food to disaster relief organizations such as the Red Cross and the Salvation Army for mass feeding or household distribution. FNS also authorizes States to provide D-SNAP benefits. Once a D-SNAP has been approved, the State agency is responsible for effectively implementing the program, ensuring program integrity, complying with Civil Rights laws, and submitting daily reports. Once program operations close, the State must perform post-disaster reviews and report their findings to FNS.

Local Responsibilities: Within Chatham County, Emergency Support Function # 11B, the Food and Water Group (ESF-11B) is responsible for directing and coordinating operations and follow-through as needed to support Nutrition Assistance and Food Safety Programs prior to, during, and following an emergency and/or disaster. These efforts include but may not be limited to:

1. Determining nutrition assistance needs. This is accomplished by:
 - a. Identifying, securing, and distributing food, bottled beverages, and supplies, and supporting the provisions for sanitary food storage distribution, and preparation during emergencies and/or disasters
 - b. arranging for delivery of supplies and
 - c. authorizing disaster food stamps
2. Coordinating/Supporting efforts to ensure the safety and security of the commercial food supply through:
 - a. Inspections to verify food safety aspects of slaughter and processing plants, products in distribution and retail sites, and import facilities at ports of entry
 - b. laboratory analysis of food samples
 - c. control of products suspected to be adulterated
 - d. ordering plant closures if needed
 - e. surveillance programs looking for food-borne disease
 - f. field investigations



Line Forms at Salvation Army Canteen

Police, Fire & EMS Services after a Disaster

Following an event like a tornado, earthquake, or even a hurricane, what exactly are the roles of local Police, Fire and EMS Units? Naturally of course, each of the three arms of public safety provide a calming presence during times of disaster. For the majority of us, there is something reassuring about seeing a group of firemen arriving at a scene, paramedics managing a difficult situation, and even a marked squad car patrolling the streets. Yes, a strong first responder presence

in these situations can help ease victims' fears and concerns.

At first glance, the specific role of first responders after a disaster is pretty direct. Police provide public safety and keep 'law and order'. Firefighters limit the spread of existing or potential fires. And EMS workers provide medical assistance. In reality, their roles are quite varied, in depth – and obviously invaluable. What other services do they provide?

Police may be involved with search and rescue, traffic and crowd control, site security

operations to prevent looting, and coordinating operations with both government and non-government agencies. To prepare, most local law enforcement agencies undergo specialized disaster management training. While each disaster is different, the plans that go into effect are structured and organized. With proper training, law enforcement can be quite efficient in executing their duties.

Firefighters find themselves just as busy in a variety of roles including controlling fires that threaten critical infrastructure, dealing

with hazardous materials, providing primary medical care, transporting victims to hospitals, conducting search and rescue, and conducting their own coordination with government and non-government agencies. Firefighters play an important role

in disaster management. In addition to handling fires, they also rely on their disaster relief training and offer some of the same roles as local law enforcement.

EMS Units are kept busy providing advanced medical care, transporting victims to hospitals, assisting with search and rescue operations, while also coordinating with other government and non-government agencies. EMS workers and medics work in partnership

with the firefighters to treat and transport victims to temporary shelters, but their duties can be expanded because 'of the moment', helping whoever may be in need.

Disaster response includes the immediate mobilization of emergency service providers and first responders. Once the 'first wave' of emergency services personnel assess the situation, local agencies may coordinate with National Guard, Coast Guard, FEMA and Red Cross officials.

To support first responders, many communities have also developed trained civilian volunteers. While police, fire and EMS emergency workers can be quickly overwhelmed during natural disasters, volunteers that have advanced training can be extremely valuable. These organized volunteers are referred to as Community Emergency Response Teams (CERTs), though there are many other local volunteer organization within communities across the country.

Chatham County has established both CERT and Search and Rescue Teams trained to assist our communities' First Responders. If you are interested in being a part of either of these volunteer teams, please contact CEMA at 201-4500.



First Responders Working I-95 Accident



L to R: Search and Rescue Team Members Work with Mosquito Control, CERT Members Learn Cribbing, CERT Member Participates in Cribbing Drill



Savannah Port Fire, February 8, 2014



How Georgia Power Prepares

When a storm threatens, Georgia Power supports their customers 24/7. Their Storm Center coordinates their company's storm readiness efforts, as well as crews from sister companies within Southern Company and neighboring utilities; to make sure they get their customers lights back on as quickly as possible.

Storm Center functions include:

- Monitoring weather and staging crews in advance of the storm.
- Coordinating crew movements in Georgia and with other companies.
- Coordinating and preparing damage assessment teams and support for our storm operations.
- Serving as a communication system for media, GEMA, and other organizations.
- Posting timely storm updates on twitter.com/georgiapower



Priority One - Get Power On

Restoration starts at the power plants, which keep working even in the most severe storms. They work first on the large transmission lines going out from the plant across the state to stricken areas. Concentrating restoration efforts begin on the main distribution lines serving communities. Returning to operation vital community services - hospitals, emergency and public safety services, and water and sewage stations - is a priority. They also focus on repairs that return power to the greatest number of customers in the least amount of time. Finally, they repair smaller lines until crews get down to individual lines in neighborhoods. During a power outage at midnight in July on Wilmington Island, the GA Power Crew was on scene immediately and restored power within 15 minutes. This situation involved a transformer and Georgia Power responded with the available parts to quickly restore power. This is the ideal situation.

ESF 12: Energy

The Disaster Finance Process

After a disaster, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Public Assistance process for receiving Federal grant funds must be followed in order to assure reimbursement for all eligible expenses. The following flow-chart shows an overview of the process:



Immediately following a disaster, the first step of the process begins with the Preliminary Damage Assessment (PDA) produced by a team comprised of a FEMA representative and a state representative. The team visits the impacted area to assess the extent of damage caused by the disaster and to determine if the costs of recovery and repair are more than what the local and state governments are capable of supporting. Once the need for Federal assistance has been determined the Governor initiates a request through the regional FEMA office for a disaster declaration. After receiving the Governor's request, the President of the United States makes the decision to declare a major disaster or existence of an emergency. This declaration activates Federal programs to assist the affected areas with recovery efforts. Information gathered during the PDA determines what Federal programs are activated.

Once the declaration has been made and the eligible programs are activated, the State will hold an Applicants' Briefing to discuss all pertinent information relating to the Public Assistance process such as: applicant eligibility, work and cost eligibility. At this time, funding, documentation and record keeping requirements will be discussed. During the briefing, the applicant is encouraged to submit the Request for Public Assistance (RPA) form. If the form is not submitted at the Applicants' Briefing, it must be submitted within thirty days of the

Disaster Declaration. The RPA officially starts the grant process and opens the management files for all future issues regarding the grant and other areas that may affect the funding.

After submission of the RPA, the applicant meets with the appointed Public Assistance Coordinator (PAC) and the Applicant Liaison during a Kickoff Meeting. During this meeting, the PAC and Liaison review the RPA and the applicant's individual needs; from this information an action plan is created. The action plan details each area of recovery and allows for future grouping of areas into manageable projects. The PAC and Liaison also provide assistance in identifying areas of Special Considerations. These areas can include historic, environmental, and hazard mitigation areas. Special Considerations are handled on different Project Worksheets and the PAC provides additional guidance for Special Considerations.

When all areas affected by the disaster have been identified, the applicant and PAC begin the Project Formulation. During this step, multiple work items are consolidated into single projects to assist with project management and funding. At this time, projects are categorized into small projects and large projects. Small projects

Continued on page 19

Cold Weather Pet Safety Continued

Continued from page 5

Be prepared: Cold weather also brings the risks of severe winter weather and power outages. Prepare a disaster/emergency kit, and include your pet in your plans. Have enough food, water and medicine (including any prescription medications as well as heartworm and flea/tick preventives) on hand to get through at least 5 days.

Provide shelter: We don't recommend keeping any pet outside for long periods of time, but if you are unable to keep your dog inside during cold weather, provide him/her with a warm, solid shelter against wind. Make sure that they have unlimited access to fresh, non-frozen water (by changing the water frequently or using a pet-safe, heated water bowl). The floor of the shelter should be off of the ground (to minimize heat loss into the ground) and the bedding should be thick, dry and changed regularly to provide a warm, dry environment. The door to the shelter should be positioned away from prevailing winds. Space heaters and heat lamps should be avoided because of the risk of burns or fire. Heated pet mats should

also be used with caution because they are still capable of causing burns.

Recognize problems: If your pet is whining, shivering, seems anxious, slows down or stops moving, seems weak, or starts looking for warm places to burrow, get them back inside quickly because they are showing signs of hypothermia. Frostbite is harder to detect, and may not be fully recognized until a few days after the damage is done. If you suspect your pet has hypothermia or frostbite, consult your veterinarian immediately.

Feed well: Keep your pet at a healthy weight throughout the winter. Some pet owners feel that a little extra weight gives their pet some extra protection from cold, but the health risks associated with that extra weight don't make it worth doing. Watch your pet's body condition and keep them in the healthy range. Outdoor pets will require more calories in the winter to generate enough body heat and energy to keep them warm – talk to your veterinarian about your pet's nutritional needs during cold weather.



ESF 11a: Animal Response, American Veterinarian Medical Foundation



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Have an Idea for the Signal?

This newsletter focuses on activities and accomplishments for each Emergency Support Function and other areas of the Emergency Management System throughout Chatham County. The newsletter is an available conduit for our partners who may have an interest in submitting a short article or to advertise an upcoming meeting, training event or exercise. For those interested in submitting content for the upcoming newsletter, please follow the submission criteria below:

- **Submissions emailed to:** Meredith Ley, maley@chathamemergency.org
- **Deadline:** March 2, 2015
- **Article Length:** 100 - 750 words
- **Article Submissions:** Include Article Title, Author Name, Title and Agency
- **Meeting Notices:** Include Meeting Title, Date, Time, Location and Point of Contact (Name, Phone and Email Address)
- **Training Notice:** Include Training Title, Date(s), Time(s), Location, Prerequisites, Registration Deadline, Costs, Point of Contact (Name, Phone and Email Address)
- **Exercise Notices:** Include Exercise Title, Date(s), Time(s), Location and Point of Contact (Name, Phone and Email Address)
- **Editorial Note:** The Editor has the discretion to edit submissions. If changes are considered substantive, the author will be contacted to review the changes prior to publication.

Functional Medical Needs Update



The Functional Medical Needs Plan is updated each year. The crucial information that is incorporated into this plan requires our partners to ensure the information is accurate from year to year. The Functional Medical Needs registry this year was managed by the Public Health Community Care Nurses. Citizens with Functional and Medical needs can call (912)

691-7443 to register themselves as a citizen needing assistance in the event of an evacuation.

Prior to hurricane season, locations of FMN registrant's homes will be identified and mapped by the County Geographic Information System (GIS). Registrants requiring ambulance transportation will also be mapped by Emergency Medical Service (EMS) providers. Mapping the locations of the registrant's will allow EMS to know where to go to help assist with the evacuation of the registrants.

ESF 08: Public Health & Medical Services

Congratulations October 2014 CERT Class



Congratulations to the newest members of the Chatham County Community Emergency Response Team. More than a dozen residents learned first-hand what it would be like following a disaster. The participants took part in the 20 hour training where they learned basic first aid, fire suppression, light search and rescue, as well as other skills. The program taught residents how to take care of themselves and their neighbors after a disaster, before first responders arrive. The class took part in their final simulation on October 11th at Southside Fire Station #3. If you are interested in taking a CERT class contact the CEMA office. Training is free.

A Word No One Wants to Hear

The movies glamorize it and the public fears it. It's a word no one wants to hear, especially when it applies to a dangerous and potentially deadly virus: "Outbreak."

The recent outbreak of Ebola in three West African countries has put the world on heightened alert and served as a wake-up call when it comes to controlling infectious disease. When such diseases emerge, public health focuses on tracking the disease and finding those who might have come into contact with disease.

Public health's primary roles when it comes to infectious diseases include providing guidance on infection control practices to healthcare providers; providing assistance to health care providers to coordinate specimen testing if a patient meets testing criteria; identifying and contacting those who were exposed to the diagnosed patient and who might be at risk for infection (also known as contact tracing); and disseminating public information regarding risk and preventive measures.

Public health authorities are in communication with hospitals, other healthcare organizations, and community partners to ensure that processes are in place to protect the public's health when, and if, infectious diseases find their way into our community. Public health also plays an active role in the Region J Coastal Healthcare Coalition, a multi-agency coalition dedicated to coordinating a regional response to disasters and emergencies that may affect coastal Georgia. In mid-October, close to 200 coalition members and other partner agencies gathered at Memorial University Medical Center for a discussion that centered on Ebola preparedness.

"It is always a good thing when community partners come together to talk about preparedness and response whether it applies to preventing the spread of infectious disease or getting ready for hurricane season," said Diane Z. Weems, M.D., District Health Director for the Coastal Health District.

ESF 08: Public Health & Medical Services Sally Silberman, Public Information Officer for the Coastal Health District



Volunteers

The Disaster Finance Process Continued

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cost between \$3,040 and \$68,500 to complete; while large projects cost between \$68,500 and \$121,600 to complete. Multiple projects can be combined to reach thresholds or to group similar projects together for tracking purposes. Once established, each project is tracked on an individual Project Worksheet (PW).

After the project formulation, the projects are reviewed for confirmation of eligibility, compliance, accuracy and to ensure the applicant receives the maximum amount of available assistance. The PAC reviews each PW for completeness. A PAC is authorized to approve any requests below \$100,000; all other requests are forwarded to the Public Assistance Officer (PAO) for approval and funding. The PAO advises the Federal Coordinating Officer on Public Assistance Program matters, works with State counterparts to ensure the Public Assistance program meets the Applicant's needs and ensures the compliance of all Public Assistance laws, regulations, and policies.

Obligation, the process of making Federal funds available, falls upon FEMA as projects are approved. Through this process, FEMA notifies the Grantee (typically the State in which the disaster occurred) that the funds are available and ready for distribution to the Sub-grantees (approved applicants). FEMA obligates funding as projects are approved and then distributes progress payments to the Grantee as actual costs are documented and submitted for payment. The Sub-grantee must submit documentation of incurred costs upon completion

of each large project. This is submitted to the Grantee for review and certification of compliance of FEMA standards. The Grantee then submits the paperwork to FEMA for final review and either obligation or de-obligation of project funding.

After each large project has been completed, the Grantee goes through a closeout process. During this process, all recovery work is completed, appeals are resolved and eligible costs have been reimbursed. If any projects are rejected for payment, the Sub-grantee has sixty days to file an appeal and provide supporting documentation. After a final answer on the appeal, the Sub-grantee finishes the closeout process and retains all documentation for possible future auditing purposes. Once all projects opened under the entire Disaster Declaration are completed, the disaster is closed out. The disaster closeout may not occur for several years depending on the extent of the damage and the timeline of recovery projects.

Throughout the process of Disaster Finance, it is imperative that the Grantee documents all activities related to each project. The documentation should begin at the preparation of a possible disaster as these costs may be reimbursable under an approved mitigation project worksheet.

For additional information on the Disaster Finance process, please visit www.fema.gov.

Disaster Financing

2015 Training & Exercise Calendar

JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL	MAY
Search and Rescue Team Training	EOC General Staff Training	Search and Rescue Team Training	EOC Supervisor Training	EOC General Staff Training
Functional/Medical Needs Workshop	WebEOC User Training	Employee Resource Center Workshop	Evacuation Assembly Area Operations Training	WebEOC User Training
	Basic Storm Spotter Training	Emergency Operations Center (EOC) Full Scale Exercise	Functional/Medical Needs Training	Search and Rescue Team Training
	Joint Information Center Operations Training			Functional/Medical Needs Tabletop Exercise
				Evacuation Assembly Area Tabletop Exercise
				Continuity of Government and Continuity of Operations Plan Tabletop Exercise
				Mass Casualty Incident Tabletop Exercise

Engineering Success

When a disaster occurs, we often think about the valuable contributions made by first responders, but emergency response efforts require more than that. In fact, the Federal Emergency Management Agency requires its rescue teams to employ at least one professional engineer. First responders are protected by laws that shield them from exposure to liability when they perform the functions of a rescue operation in good faith. Professional engineers, however, often are not protected from liability for personal injury or death. Currently, only 30 states, including Georgia, have Good Samaritan laws that grant protection to engineers who provide emergency services during a disaster.

As proven by the relief efforts following the explosion at the Sugar Refinery, Hurricanes Sandy, Irene, Katrina and Rita, and the 9/11 terrorist attacks, professional engineers' expertise in assessing structural, mechanical, electrical, or other infrastructure is invaluable to assisting federal, state, or local governments that may have limited resources during emergencies. After the Boston Marathon bombings, professional engineers were asked to provide structural engineering assessments to determine whether certain Boston buildings were safe for investigators.

It is crucial that the federal and state governments establish liability protections that provide immunity for design professionals during exigent circumstances and declared emergencies so that they

can quickly volunteer their services without being deterred by liability concerns. In return, the government would be able to quickly mobilize design professionals to adequately evaluate threats to the public's health and safety.

National Society of Professional Engineers (NSPE) supports the adoption of Good Samaritan laws that provide immunity from liability for any personal injury, wrongful death, property damage, or other loss caused by a professional engineer's acts, errors, or omissions in the performance of voluntary engineering services. Such laws eliminate the liability deterrent that may discourage engineers from providing voluntary services, thereby promoting professional engineers' voluntary participation in emergency relief efforts. Good Samaritan laws covering engineers also allow states and localities to include voluntary engineering assistance in their disaster plans. It should also include protection for design professionals responding to smaller emergencies that might not be full scale disasters.

Hopefully the Federal, States and Local Governments will all provide the protection.

ESF 03: Engineering

SAVE THE DATE



THE 2015 HURRICANE CONFERENCE

When: April 7, 2015

Where: Savannah International Trade
& Convention Center

Price: \$55.00, Hot Lunch Provided

Registration Opens December 15, 2014

For More Information, Visit ChathamEmergency.org or Call CEMA at 912-201-4500

